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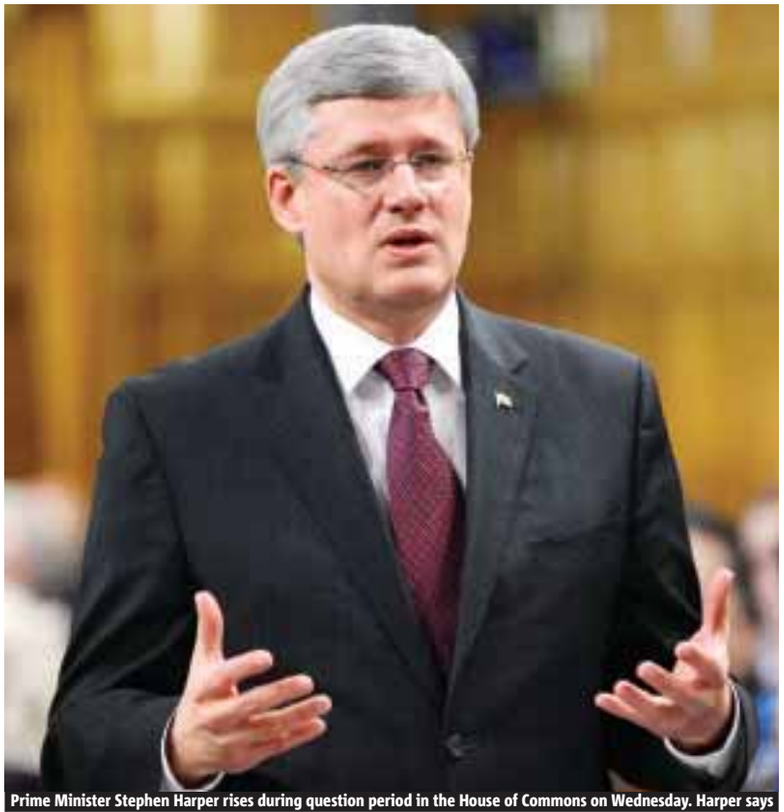
Robocalls 'within the process': PM



Prime Minister Stephen Harper rises during question period in the House of Commons on Wednesday. Harper says the Conservative party was operating within a normal electoral-review process when it used robocalls to explore public opinion on proposed changes to riding boundaries in Saskatchewan — but opposition critics don't agree.
ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Under fire in the Commons. Harper says party broke no rules with so-called 'push-poll' calls on proposed changes to electoral boundaries

The Conservative party was operating within the bounds of normal process when it used robocalls to explore public opinion surrounding plans to change riding boundaries in Saskatchewan, Prime Minister Stephen Harper says.

Not so, opposition critics — including NDP Leader Tom Mulcair and interim Liberal leader Bob Rae — cried Wednesday as they accused the Conservatives of using "fraudulent" calls to manipulate the process.

An arm's-length, independent commission is proposing to redistribute some of the province's 14 federal ridings in order to better reflect increasingly urban populations in Regina and Saskatoon.

But the changes have met with stiff resistance from Conservatives, who hold 13 of Saskatchewan's 14 seats and fear a more concentrated urban vote in some ridings might favour their political rivals.

The Conservatives admitted being responsible for the so-called "push-poll" calls to would-be voters in Saskatchewan, which said some proposed changes to electoral boundaries would undermine provincial values.

The computer-generated calls identified no political party, saying only that they came from a company called Chase Research. That was a mistake, the Conservatives say.

In the face of a barrage of opposition questions Wednesday in the House of Commons, however, Harper insisted the party broke no rules.

"The party followed the rules and our position to the public is very clear on the commission," he said. "The commission is working to redraw the electoral boundaries according to the law."

He said it's part of the normal effort to produce new electoral boundaries.

"We are simply operating within the process," he said.

Rae described the calls as nothing short of a Conservative effort to gerrymander Saskatchewan ridings.

But Harper said the commission expects to hear outside comment. "Those commissions accept and expect input from parliamentarians, from political parties and from the general public."

Mulcair, for his part, was scornful: "Since when do robocalls become input in our political process?"

Saskatchewan Liberal MP Ralph Goodale has asked the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission to investigate the matter.

Goodale called the robocalls a "deplorable" attempt to undermine the work of the commission that should be fully investigated by the federal telecommunications regulator. THE CANADIAN PRESS

No rest for Wickenheiser

Renaissance woman: Hockey hero Hayley juggles school and career goals with the all-important task of promoting Canada's sport PAGE 4

Mmmm ... 'The Priestley'

Tim Hortons experiments with a Timbit-filled doughnut inspired by How I Met Your Mother, which featured a cameo by Jason Priestley PAGE 9

Shirley but it's not all serious

The star of Persephone Theatre's Shirley Valentine hopes the show provides some food for thought, as well as a lot of laughs PAGE 11

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Saskatoon one of Canada's most romantic cities

Paris of the Prairies. Recent numbers from Amazon rank city at No. 6, beating out Regina, Vancouver and Winnipeg

MORGAN MODJESKI
morgan.modjeski@metronews.ca

They don't call Saskatoon the Paris of the Prairies for nothing. Recent rankings have Saskatoon as one of Canada's most romantic cities.

Recent numbers from Amazon.ca, ranking cities' romance levels based on sales data of romance novels, relationship books, romantic comedy DVDs and a collection of romantic music CDs, have the City of Bridges in the top 10.

Out of the top 20 cities, Saskatoon ranked sixth, beating its provincial counterpart Regina, which ranked 14th and scored higher than other Canadian cities like Vancouver (seventh) and Winnipeg (19th).

Mayor of Saskatoon Donald Atchison said one of the likely reasons Saskatoon has received such a high ranking is because of the number of young people who live in the city.

"We have the youngest population in Canada on a per-capita basis and here we have a lot people who enjoy movies, enjoy sports, enjoy culture and restaurants and all the other things, so it's easy to see why we're number six in all of Canada," said Atchison, adding his perfect romantic night is a candlelight dinner and movie.

Others in the business of romance like Geraldine Franklin, who is a manager at Harden & Huyse Chocolates in Saskatoon, said the city's reputation is well deserved.

"We do find that it is very romantic," said Franklin. "Often we have people who come in and they want to do a proposal with the chocolate, so we've done things like putting the engagement ring within the chocolate box or within a chocolate."

"I think the Prairies on the whole has always been romantic. You have the beautiful sunrises and wonderful sunsets and sometimes the cold winters causes you to stay indoors and spend time with each other and that all helps with the romance," she said.

This is the fourth year Amazon has released the rankings, which examine all Canadian cities with a population greater than 80,000 on a per-capita basis.

Geraldine Franklin, a manager at Harden & Huyse Chocolates, poses for a photo with some of the many Valentine treats Harden and Huyse has prepared for the big day. MORGAN MODJESKI/METRO

Job opportunities

Saskatoon among fastest growing cities in Canada

With Saskatoon and Regina among the fastest growing and youngest cities, according to data from Statistics Canada, it becomes pretty clear that more and more people are moving to Saskatchewan every year.

The data, which examines census metropolitan areas (CMAs) between July 2011 and July 2012, shows that Saskatoon secured the top spot with the strongest annual growth rate of any CMA in 15 years — a jump of 40.4 persons per thousand. With a median age of 34.9 years, Saskatoon is also the youngest.

"It shows that we're a very successful community because people love to go to live where they are successful. They not going to where they're failing," said Saskatoon Mayor Don Atchison.

When it comes to explaining why people are moving to Saskatoon, Atchison said there are a number of factors that make Saskatoon attractive to others, including job and research opportunities. METRO

Interim chief

Police chief gets pacemaker after falling ill

Saskatoon's police chief has had surgery in Florida to implant a pacemaker after he fell ill while on vacation.

A news release from the mayor's office says Chief Clive Weighill has been released from hospital and is resting comfortably.

The surgery Monday was performed after tests showed Weighill had a low heart rate.

He had felt weak and dizzy and was admitted to hospital.

Weighill is to return to Saskatoon late next week.

Deputy Bernie Pannell will be acting chief until that time. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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SUMA convention wraps up in Saskatoon with cabinet bear pit

Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association. Premier says conversations with SUMA important in addressing municipal issues

MORGAN MODJESKI
morgan.modjeski@metronews.ca

Elected officials from Saskatchewan urban municipalities got a chance to grill provincial cabinet ministers in a bear-pit session on pressing issues in their community on Wednesday morning.

On the final day of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA) annual convention, officials raised issues about education, infrastructure and health.

"It's a chance for councillors and representatives of communities of all sizes to raise specific issues, some very, very local issues and some broader issues that are raised in a local context," said Premier Brad Wall.

He added for a number of the issues, the bear pit isn't the first time the provincial government has discussed them, but he said the session — and the entire SUMA convention — was a chance for municipalities to voice concerns with ministers face-to-face.

"Ministers (are) here for the whole convention, for all four days in breakout meetings, listening to mayors, listening to councillors about concerns they have, and that's why the conventions are always quite successful," said Wall.

"We do take back some of the themes that are raised and ministers take back a lot of specific case work and I think that's a good thing."

Newly elected SUMA president Debra Button spoke during a scrum held prior to the afternoon meeting on Wednesday. Button said she felt her first convention as president was a success, but added for her the work has just begun.

"For me, the conference was a campaign, election and visiting with (media), so I'm interested to sit down with the board (Wednesday) afternoon and start to make some groundwork and hear what the board has to say, and to start to set the direction as we move forward," said Button.

Premier Brad Wall speaks to media on the last day of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association annual convention, which wrapped up Wednesday afternoon. As part of the convention's last day, elected officials from municipal communities got to grill provincial ministers on specific issues in a bear-pit session. MORGANMODJESKI/METRO

Saskatchewanian Wickenheiser talks life after hockey

Shaunavon, Sask., native Hayley Wickenheiser poses with some of her hockey hardware. CONTRIBUTED/DAVE HOLLAND

Some people might take it easy after winning three Olympic gold medals, six more gold medals at the women's world hockey championships and breaking countless barriers in women's sport at the same time, but Hayley Wickenheiser isn't the type to rest on her laurels.

"I knew someday I would have to get a real job," said the hockey legend from Shaunavon, Sask.

Wickenheiser, 34, is nearing completion of her degree at the University of Calgary and her next life goal sees her setting her sights high once more.

"I'm doing kinesiology with an eye on going to medical school," said Wickenheiser. "I am going to finish in April.

"I spent a lot of time lately in hospitals shadowing (doctors) just to see what working in a hospital is like," said Wickenheiser. "I find it just like hockey — a team environment where everyone is under a lot of pressure,"

But even with all of her commitments Wickenheiser has also found the time to promote the sport of hockey across Canada through Kraft Hockey Goes On.

The program gives communities a chance to nominate their local hockey heroes, leaders and volunteers to be recognized nationally and bring in huge cash donations for local hockey programs.

The top five nominees will receive $100,000 for their local hockey association, while an additional 20 individuals will receive $20,000 — something Wickenheiser said could be game-changing for young athletes.

"It is huge, I mean $100,000 to a community arena can go a long way to adding more equipment or updating facilities," said Wickenheiser. "You can visit Krafthockeygoeson.ca to nominate."

JEFF MACKEY/METRO IN REGINA

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Rights group warns of repeated mob-led sexual assaults in Egypt

Amnesty International. President Morsi urged to put an end to the violence against women

Egyptian women gather to denounce sexual violence and harassment in Cairo on Wednesday. VIRGINIE NGUYEN HOANG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mob-led sexual assaults targeting Egypt's female protesters could increase if perpetrators are not punished, an international rights group warned on Wednesday.

Amnesty International said statements from victims show that the assaults follow a "clear pattern," where mobs of men encircle the victims, assault them with weapons and hands and then try to undress them.

Amnesty's warning followed a statement from the UN human-rights office, which last week said that about 25 women were reportedly sexually assaulted — in some cases with extraordinary violence — in Cairo's Tahrir Square during recent demonstrations against Egypt's Islamist President Mohammed Morsi.

The square was the centre of the 2011 uprising that toppled former president Hosni Mubarak. It has been the scene of a number of assaults against women — both protesters and journalists — in the aftermath of the uprising and a place where women have been stripped, groped and raped at demonstrations.

The UN agency demanded that Egyptian authorities take steps to bring the perpetrators to justice. Amnesty also urged prompt action.

"Horrific, violent attacks on women, including rape in the vicinity of Tahrir Square, demonstrate that it's now crucial President Morsi takes drastic steps to end this culture of impunity and gender-based discrimination," said the London-based group. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Amnesty

19 violent attacks on women in one day: Report

Amnesty International cited a report by a local anti-harassment group, which said that a total of 19 violent attacks against women took place on Jan. 25 alone — the day Egyptians staged a huge demonstration in Cairo to mark the second anniversary of the uprising that ousted Mubarak.

Activists have called the incidents the worst in years, describing them as the darkest stain on the country's opposition street movement.

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Toddler killed in dispute with family over one-child limit

Two detained in China.
Couple's third child run over during conflict with Communist Party official

Police have detained a local official and a driver for allegedly running over and killing a 13-month-old boy during an argument with his family over the payment of a fine for violating China's strict family-planning limits, state media and the local government said Wednesday.

The boy's death Monday is the latest incident to aggravate long-running public resentment over the family-planning rules that limit many families to one child and some rural ones to two.

After the incident in a village outside the eastern city of Rui'an, thousands of residents protested outside local government offices, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

Collecting fine

A team of 11 officials went to the village to persuade Chen Liandi and his wife Li Yuhong to pay a fine for violating the family-planning limits.

- Xinhua said the requested fine totalled more than 30,000 yuan ($4,700 US) and was for giving birth to the boy.

Police detained the two people on unspecified charges late Tuesday, said a statement on the Rui'an government's official website. Xinhua identified them as a local Communist Party chief named Bai and a driver.

How the toddler came to be run over is not completely clear from the government and state media accounts. Rui'an's party Propaganda Department declined further comment.

Officials went to the village to persuade Chen Liandi and his wife Li Yuhong to pay a fine for violating the country's family-planning limits.

An argument ensued and Chen tried to prevent the officials from taking Li to a government office, though she soon relented and agreed to get into a car and go, the accounts said. In the confrontation, the boy dropped from Chen's arms and was run over by a vehicle, the government statement and state media said. Xinhua said Chen tried to pull the boy away but was too late.

Reports of the incident have further inflamed popular dislike of the family limits and the use of beatings, forced abortions and sterilizations.

Photos posted online of a woman forced to undergo an abortion when seven months pregnant, because the family could not pay the fine of 40,000 yuan ($6,300 US) for having a second child, sparked national outrage last summer.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Unrest feared in Tunisia after political assassination

Tunisians demonstrate outside the home of opposition leader Chokri Belaid after he was shot to death in Tunis, Wednesday. A critic of the Islamist-led government and violence by radical Muslims, Belaid's killing is the first political assassination in post-revolutionary Tunisia. His death is likely to heighten tensions in the North African nation, where the path from dictatorship to democracy so far has been seen as a model for the Arab world. AMINE LANDOULSI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Komodo dragon

Giant lizard attacks workers in park

A park official says two people have been hospitalized after being attacked by a giant komodo dragon that wandered into the office of a wildlife park in eastern Indonesia.

An official at Komodo National Park, Heru Rudiharto, said Wednesday the two-metre-long animal attacked a park ranger after walking into the office on Tuesday. It then attacked another park employee who came to help him. Both were badly bitten. THE ASSOCIATES PRESS

Samsung phone battery

Is that a fire in your pants or ...

South Korean fire officials say a man suffered burns after the battery from a Samsung smartphone caught fire in his trouser pocket.

The lithium-ion battery was not in the phone when it caught fire, officials said Wednesday. Such batteries are quick to charge but prone to overheating.
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Federal government appeals ruling on status of Indians

Thirteen-year battle. Ramifications demand a higher judicial ruling, minister argues

The federal government will appeal a landmark Federal Court ruling that would vastly expand the ranks of people considered Indians under the Constitution.

After more than 13 years of legal wrangling, the court ruled last month that Métis and non-status Indians are indeed "Indians" under a section of the Constitution Act, and therefore fall under federal jurisdiction.

On Wednesday, Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan told the House of Commons that the ramifications of the decision demand a ruling from a higher judicial authority.

"Given that the Federal Court decision raises complex legal issues, it is prudent for Canada to obtain a decision from a higher court," Duncan said.

"After careful consideration of the decision, Canada has filed an appeal, and it would be inappropriate to comment further as the case is before the courts."

Among other things, Duncan said, the services provided to Aboriginal Peoples by the federal government have to be affordable.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

One reason

"Our government must ensure that programs and services to Aboriginal Peoples are fiscally sustainable."

Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan, offering one reason the federal government is seeking a higher judicial review.

The struggle continues

The case dragged on for years before the ruling last month.

- **Case history.** The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples and several Métis and non-status Indians took the government to court in 1999, alleging discrimination.
- **Congress response.** National Chief Betty Ann Lavallee said she was "truly disappointed, but at the same time not surprised."
- **At stake.** Lavallee said the decision "comes at the expense of ... the 'Forgotten Peoples' of Canada struggling for recognition of their constitutional rights, equality, dignity, self-worth and fairness."

Sexy Anne of Green Gables mortifies nation of readers

A new image of Canada's most beloved literary orphan has Canadians seeing red, but not where they're supposed to.

A new edition of Anne of Green Gables depicts the notoriously youthful and ruddy-headed heroine as a curvaceous blond teen, sparking a fierce backlash from scholars and casual readers alike.

Critics derided the cover, saying it is a far cry from the feisty, 19th-century 11-year-old brought to life in the pages of L.M. Montgomery's classic novels.

The image appears on the cover of a Three in One edition produced by CreateSpace, a subsidiary of the Amazon group that allows people to self-publish their material.

CreateSpace did not respond to requests for comment, but readers were not so reticent.

Many argued the picture, which flatly contradicts many textual references to Anne's appearance, amounts to character assassination.

"Anne's fiery hair, unfortunate complexion and gangly build define her character ... for she learns to cultivate ideals of inner and outer beauty," one reader wrote on the book's Amazon.com page.

Nick Mount, Canadian literature professor at the University of Toronto, suspects the photo was used in part to contravene copyright protections.

While Montgomery's text is in the public domain, the traditional image of Anne is owned jointly by the province of Prince Edward Island and the heirs to the author's estate.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The cover image of a new edition by CreateSpace, left, meets Anne's copyrighted traditional look. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cost disparity. Senators urge tariff review to help match U.S. prices

A Senate committee says Ottawa should launch a comprehensive review of tariffs as a way of narrowing the price gap between Canadian and U.S. consumer goods.

The committee says Canadian consumers feel ripped off by higher prices in Canada, but the problem is not as simple as it appears.

A report cites factors like the different size in the market and the fact suppliers often charge Canadian retailers more than counterparts in the U.S.

But it also notes that many witnesses pointed the finger at import tariffs applied by the federal government on consumer goods, which can sometimes reach as high as 18 per cent.

Prior to the report's release, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said the government has been looking into tariffs, particularly on consumer goods, to see if they can be lowered or eliminated.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prediction

The report expects the price differential between goods in Canada and the U.S. to close as competition increases and more consumers become price-savvy.

Bulgarian bus bombing. Canadian suspect in act of terror left nation at 12

Immigration Minister Jason Kenney sparked fresh debate about Canada's responsibilities to its dual citizens Wednesday as he shed a little more light on the shadowy suspect in a terrorist attack in Bulgaria last summer.

Kenney said the Lebanese-Canadian man arrived in Canada at age eight and lived in Vancouver with his mother before becoming a citizen, then returned to Lebanon when he was 12.

Bulgarian authorities say that's where they believe the man is now, along with the other suspect in the July attack, which killed five Israeli tourists, a Bulgarian bus driver and a third suspect — the bomber himself.

While the Lebanese-Canadian individual may not have lived in Canada recently, Kenney said the controversy raises the question of what to do about citizens who go abroad to commit acts of terror.

He suggested the government ought to look at a mechanism for stripping Canadian citizenship from those involved in terrorist acts abroad.

Conservative MP Devinder Shory currently has a private member's bill before the Commons that, among other things, would revoke citizenship from dual nationals if they engage in an act of war against the Canadian military.

"I think that perhaps we should consider working with Mr. Shory to broaden the scope of his bill," Kenney said.

Federal opposition leaders cautioned against a rushed response. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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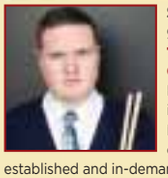

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Vancouver

Stolen dogs found over 100 km away

Two dogs stolen when a thief made off with a dog-walker's truck in Vancouver have been found more than 100 kilometres away.

There were four dogs in the truck when a thief drove it away on Tuesday.

Two were found shortly after, apparently dropped off several blocks away.

Mounties said someone reported the abandoned vehicle on a tree farm about a 90-minute drive east of Vancouver with the missing dogs still in the back of the truck. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tokenism. Monopoly fans vote to add cat, toss iron

Scottie dog has a new nemesis in Monopoly after fans from more than 120 countries voted to add a cat token to the property trading board game, replacing the iron, toy maker Hasbro Inc. announced Wednesday. It was the first time that fans have had a say on which of the eight tokens to add and which one to toss.

The results were announced after passionate efforts by fans to save their favourite tokens and businesses eager to capitalize on publicity surrounding pieces that represent their products. The shoe and the wheelbarrow had joined the iron as endangered tokens.

The online contest to change the tokens was sparked by chatter on Facebook, where Monopoly has more than 10 million fans. The vote on Facebook closed just before midnight on Tuesday.

The initiative was intended to ensure that a game created nearly eight decades ago remains relevant and engaging to fans today. The tokens have changed quite a lot since Parker Brothers bought the game from its original designer in 1935.

The cat beat out the robot, diamond ring, helicopter and guitar, getting 31 per cent of votes for new tokens.

"I think there were a lot of cat lovers in the world that reached out and voted," said Jonathan Berkowitz, vice-president for Hasbro gaming marketing.

The Scottie dog was the most popular of the classic tokens, and received 29 per cent of the vote, the company said. The iron got the fewest votes and was kicked to the curb.

The tokens originated when the niece of game creator Charles Darrow suggested using bracelet charms. The other tokens currently in use are a race car, shoe, thimble, top hat, wheelbarrow and battleship. Most of the pieces were introduced with the first Parker Brothers iteration of the game in 1935, and the Scottie dog and wheelbarrow were added in the early 1950s.

The original version also included a lantern, purse, cannon and a rocking horse. THE CANADIAN PRESS

'The Priestley' comes to life — but luckily not for long

Yuckiest flavour ever?

Tim Hortons bakes up a batch of fictional doughnuts mentioned on television show

This photo from @TimHortons Twitter feed shows a one-off doughnut called "The Priestley," which the company made after it was mentioned on an episode of How I Met Your Mother. TWITTER

A sitcom gag about the ubiquitous presence of Tim Hortons has inspired the company to create an outlandish new pastry — a Timbit stuffed into a jam-filled doughnut.

A company spokeswoman says the one-time only experiment — a photo of which appeared on its Twitter feed Tuesday — was inspired by a recent episode of How I Met Your Mother.

The Canadian-themed episode featured a cameo by homegrown star Jason Priestley, who boasted of a self-created confection he dubbed "The Priestley."

Tim Hortons spokeswoman Alexandra Cygal says a staff member who happens to be a fan of the show as well as a "certified culinary scientist" created the doughnut as a fun exercise.

"The day after the show aired he just came into work and decided to create The Priestley in his lab, so we had a lot of fun with it," Cygal said Wednesday, adding that there are no plans to mass-produce the treat. "It's generated a lot of positive buzz and great exposure for our brand both in Canada and the U.S."

Monday's episode of How I Met Your Mother featured a cavalcade of Canadian stars including Luc Robitaille, Steven Page, k.d. lang, Geddy Lee, Alex Trebek, Alan Thicke and Paul Shaffer.

They pop up when recurring character Barney Stinson, played by Neil Patrick Harris, travels to Canada to learn more about his Canadian girlfriend Robin Scherbatsky, played by real-life Canuck actress Cobie Smulders.

He discovers a country obsessed with Tim Hortons doughnuts, as revealed by a faux documentary in which Priestley claims to have invented "The Priestley."

Tim Hortons jumped on the idea after the broadcast, posting a photo of what the baked treat would look like.

"We loved the idea of 'The Priestley' so much, we made a batch," the company said in a tweet and photo posted Tuesday afternoon.

"A Timbit IN a doughnut? Genius." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Stock flotation: Dead herring cost a cool $9.8M

Herring worth millions in exports are seen floating dead Tuesday in Kolgrafafjordur, a small fjord in west Iceland, for the second time in two months. Between 25,000 and 30,000 tons of fish died in December and more are dead now, due to lack of oxygen in the water thought to have been caused by a landfill and bridge constructed across the fjord in December 2004. The current export value of the estimated 10,000 tons of herring amounts to about $9.8 million, according to Morgunbladid newspaper. BRYNJAR GAUTI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Launch day

BlackBerry breaks own sales records

BlackBerry says it is smashing its own sales records with the launch of its new smartphones, but just how many devices it has sold is still a secret. The firm said Wednesday that the BlackBerry Z10 had the "best day ever for the first day of a launch."

"In fact, it was more than 50 per cent better than any other launch day in our history in Canada," said company president and CEO Thorsten Heins. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Spring fling

Home Depot to hire 6,700

Home Depot Canada says it's hiring 6,700 people ahead of its busy spring season. The chain says it is looking to fill full-, part-time and seasonal positions in sales, design and various other job categories.

It says opportunities will vary in each of its 180 stores across the country. The company employs some 28,000 people in Canada. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Musical milestone

iTunes sells 25 billion songs

The answer to the trivia question will be: Monkey Drums (Goskel Vancin Remix) by Chase Buch. That's the 25-billionth song sold on iTunes.

Apple announced the sales milestone in a news release Wednesday.

The company says that Phillip Lupke of Germany purchased and downloaded Buch's song and will receive an iTunes gift card worth about $13,500. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 100.45¢ (+0.07¢)

TSX 12,761.59 (+15.95)

OIL $96.62 US (-2¢)

GOLD $1,678.80 US (+$5.30)

Natural gas: $3.43 US (+3¢)
Dow Jones: 13,986.52 (+7.22)

Australia. Court sides with Google over deceptive ads

Australia's highest court on Wednesday threw out a ruling against Google Inc. that had found the Internet giant guilty of breaching trade law by hosting deceptive advertisements.

The High Court's decision overturned a federal court ruling from April that Google had engaged in misleading or deceptive conduct with four ads that appeared on its Google Australia website. The advertisers used the names of competitors as keywords to trigger their own ads appearing.

The federal court ruled this was likely to mislead people searching for information about those competitors, and therefore violated Australia's Trade Practices Act, which bars corporations from engaging in deceptive conduct. Google argued that it was not responsible for the content of the ads. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Notice for Publication

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR A PRIVATE BILL

Lutheran Sunset Home of Saskatoon

Notice is hereby given that a Petition to the Legislature for a Private bill shall be presented, requesting that an Act be passed by the Legislative Assembly to provide for an amendment to An Act to incorporate Lutheran Sunset Home of Saskatoon to set out the capacity and powers of the corporation and the officer and directors, and secondly, to indemnify and limit liability of the directors and officers of the corporation.

Dated at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan this 1st day of February, 2013.

Vivienne Hauck
Chief Executive Officer
Luthercare Communities

BORDER-CROSSING MADE EASY AS PIE (NOTE: PIES WILL BE CONFISCATED)

HE SAYS...
John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

Hello, fellow Canucks, and welcome to this special guide on how to get through U.S. customs, no fuss, no muss!

(The U.S. government advises that if you do have muss, you must say how long you have had it, where you obtained it and whether you plan to use it for business or pleasure.)

Shhh!

Remember that airports and border crossings are highly inappropriate places to talk about terrorism. Instead, say "extremism."

Sure, sometimes small hiccups can happen at the border. For instance, there was the recent case of a Canadian man who was not allowed to attend the Super Bowl because of a 1981 marijuana conviction.

(The U.S. government warns that marijuana has been proven to alter the brain, which under U.S. law is only appropriate when it involves heavy drinkers watching large men give each other concussions.)

And, yes, most of us have a friend or relative who's had trouble at the border. An ex of mine was recently denied entry because something alarmed U.S. customs officials. Keep in mind that she is a white, rail-thin woman with blond hair, a big smile and Cameron Diaz's looks, but not as threatening. Also, her passport is full of Middle Eastern stamps because she lived there for two years.

I'm here to assure you that these instances are the exception, not the norm. By following these simple tips at border crossings and airports, you can change entering and leaving the U.S. from a long and terrifying ordeal to a long and tedious annoyance.

U.S., eh? Tips for crossing the U.S.-Canada border:

While you wait:

- If you must walk through a metal detector, remember to remove shoes, jackets, scarves, belts, bracelets, underthings, fillings, false hips, glass eyes, any bodily fluids hidden in your body, your allegiance to your country and that stupid smirk on your face.
- Remember that airports and border crossings are highly inappropriate places to talk about terrorism. Instead, say "extremism."

Talking with the customs officers:

- Remember that being a customs official is a stressful, repetitive occupation, so you should relieve the tension with a few well-timed zingers. They LOVE it! Joking with the official about how he or she is a glorified mall cop will liven up an otherwise dreary day.
- Also, show the official you are friendly and confident by finishing every sentence with "Bucko!"

What to declare:

- No endangered species are allowed, especially as articles of clothing. (For example, on the not-acceptable list: Elephant-tooth necklace with lion-skin shawl; acceptable: Housecoat made of house cats.)
- The U.S. considers Cuba an evil empire. If you have a Cuban cigar, be sure to label it as a finely rolled Saudi Arabian.

Drugs:

- If you have a marijuana conviction, you are required by law to declare it, unless you got it at a duty-free shop.
- There are only two ways to regain permission to enter the U.S. after a drug conviction: 1) obtain a pardon, or 2) score an interview with Oprah.

Those are the tips. We hope you found them helpful. By following these simple rules, your U.S. trip will be easy as pie.

(Please be advised that U.S. regulations stipulate that all pies will be confiscated. Also, if you have any ice cream and a fork, that'd be great.)

Open-concept house for sale

Life is plastic

It's fantastic: Barbie lists abode

After 41 years, Mattel's leading lady is moving out. Toy maker Mattel announced Wednesday Barbie is looking for a new home and selling her Malibu, Calif., Dreamhouse.

In her search for a new pink abode, the septuagenarian doll will make a number of worldwide appearances, including World Mastercard Fashion Week in Toronto in March to meet with some Canuck designers. METRO

'Ken' I come, too?

Do you want to know what it's like in Barbie world?

Wondering what the house — which started its fictional life as a studio apartment in 1962 and has undergone 10 renovations — is like?

Mattel is letting fans immerse themselves into Barbie's world with a real-life experience, giving girls the chance to see the Dreamhouse in person.

Or, they can get a glimpse of Barbie in her reality web series that's airing on Barbie.com.

The site even allows girls to customize their own Dreamhouse.

METRO

Icon looks to move after decades in Dreamhouse

"It wasn't an easy decision for Barbie to put her Dreamhouse on the market, but this move marks an unprecedented opportunity for her fans to get an inside look at her dreamy home."

Lori Pantel,
vice-president of global marketing for Barbie

Open house

Three walls equal great ocean view

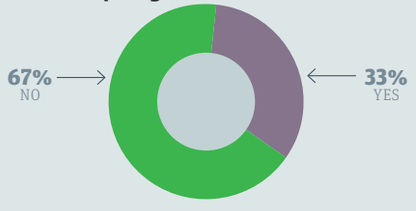
The 8,500-square-foot (measured in her heels), three-storey bachelorette compound features a spacious bedroom, three chandeliers, one elevator — in pink and with a state-of-the-art pulley system — and the best ocean view in Malibu (after all, it only has three walls).

METRO

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Should sperm donors be able to apply to see their offspring?



Twitter

@SaskGatz: Need to make a roux? I suggest using gluten free flour, was so easy! #GlutenFree

@TheOtherHilary: I like having a physical keyboard, but goddamn is the Blackberry OS unintuitive.

@marcnorris: Goodmorning world. Nothing like some winter air to wake you up in the morning. #saskatoon #winter

@wheatmonkeys: Whitehorse at Broadway theatre tonight was epic. Blew me away #lukedoucet #whitehorse #Saskatoon

@BSnowsell: Yes, winter is over 1/2 done, but I just bought winter tires. #Holycow #whatadifference

@jasonaebig: Anything's possible when people ignore who will get credit and who will get blamed.

metro

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Nora McLellan stars in Shirley Valentine, which runs at Persephone Theatre through Feb. 10. HANDOUT

Becoming Shirley Valentine

One-woman show. Actress Nora McLellan talks to Metro about her work onstage and her love of this city

BACKSTAGE PASS
Simon Hiatt
saskatoon@metronews.ca

Nora McLellan's performance as the lead — and only actor — in Persephone Theatre's Shirley Valentine is a testament to her endurance, self-confidence and memorization skills.

As impressive as her work is in the one-woman show, her offstage commitment is just as telling. As she sat down for an interview during one of the coldest days of the year in Saskatoon, she had just returned from receiving a spray tan to achieve the look she requires for part of the production.

"I just had someone bring me a cup of tea because a spray tan goes on cold," McLellan said. "You're sitting there naked being sprayed with cold ... I don't even want to know what it was."

The Vancouver native has become well accustomed to life in Saskatoon during the winter. She has appeared in Persephone productions three times — first in 1979's 18 heels, followed 30 years later by For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again.

"I'm hoping Del (Surjik, Persephone's artistic director) brings me back to do a show (in) September, because I've never been here when it's not the dead of winter. It's such a pretty city and I'd really like to see it sometime."

McLellan says working for Persephone appeals to actors because of the quality and diversity of their productions. The company is coming off of its largest-ever production, The Sound of Music, and is now doing perhaps its most intimate with this solo show.

And even though there may be a difference in scope between the productions, McLellan says Shirley Valentine shouldn't be viewed as a "small" play.

"The ideas of this play are quite large. It's not The Sound of Music, but there's a lot of action going on in this show. I play nine or 10 characters, and there are things to think about and hopefully a lot of laughs."

The play tells the story of a middle-aged British housewife who feels stuck in a rut, but receives an opportunity to expand her horizons. McLellan stresses it isn't just aimed at a female audience.

"As Shirley herself says, 'It's not just women, it's the same for everyone.' Shirley has a problem with not living life fully," said McLellan.

And while the burden of carrying a two-hour performance entirely by herself may seem challenging, that's what drew McLellan to the role.

"It's demanding, I won't lie to you. But it just seemed like an opportunity to see if I could pull it off."

Persephone Theatre

Nora McLellan's affection for Persephone Theatre can be traced to her close friendship with Susan and Janet Wright, and Janet's husband Brian Richmond, who founded the company nearly 40 years ago, and whom she describes as being "like family." They named it Persephone after the Greek Goddess of fertility in the hopes that it "would be capable of growth and change, like the changing seasons of Saskatchewan, reproducing classic and new plays alike."

The positive effect of playing a psychiatrist

Interview. Catherine Zeta-Jones speaks about what brought her back to the big screen and her connection to family

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News

Catherine Zeta-Jones returns to the big screen to work with Steven Soderbergh. HANDOUT

Side Effects brings actress Catherine Zeta-Jones and director Steven Soderbergh together for the third time, following Traffic and Ocean's 12, and Zeta-Jones says Soderbergh knows the secret to keeping actors coming back.

"He rubbed my feet when I was pregnant in Traffic. That's the only reason why I keep coming back," she says with a laugh.

"He looked after a pregnant woman so well, I just knew I'd always be in good hands."

Of course, it takes more than foot rubs to get Zeta-Jones interested in a project. Over the past few years, she has focused on her home life following husband Michael Douglas' battle with cancer.

"I love my job, but it takes me a lot to leave my kids, leave my husband and leave my dogs," she says.

"I find it really hard to leave my children. I think that I'll never get these beautiful, formative, delicious years back, and it takes me great thought and what is it that I want to leave my kids and my husband for? And this obviously was a must for me. I'd pretty much do the phone book with Steven if he asked me, just read it in three different languages — French, Welsh and English."

There was one other element of Side Effects that had a can't-miss appeal for Zeta-Jones, and that was the chance to tackle playing an accomplished psychiatrist.

"I'm actually thrilled that Steven cast me as a doctor because I never went to college, and I always wanted an M.D. after my name," she says. "I'm really quite flattered that he fulfilled my mother's dream."

There are other gigs beckoning Zeta-Jones away from home, too.

She just wrapped filming on Red 2, the sequel to the 2011 action hit starring Bruce Willis and Helen Mirren, and she'll be on stage later this month at the Oscars for the awards show's tribute to musicals from the past decade, including Chicago, for which Zeta-Jones won an Oscar.

"I'm absolutely terrified. I don't quite know the exact capacity in which I will be (involved)," she says.

"I'll be there, put it that way. I don't quite know what I'll be doing. That will be fun."

Her husband is kissing Matt Damon

Catherine Zeta-Jones' husband, Michael Douglas, is also re-teaming with director Steven Soderbergh, taking on the role of Liberace in the HBO movie Behind the Candelabra. The role calls for Douglas to lock lips on-screen with co-star Matt Damon, something Zeta-Jones says she's OK with.

- **Quote.** "I've seen Behind the Candelabra and if my husband's going to kiss anybody else in the world, I'm so happy it's Matt Damon," she says. "Supposedly when Matt Damon was kissing Michael, he closed his eyes and pretended he was kissing me. He said that to Michael. Matt was closing his eyes and kissing Michael and pretending he was kissing me, and I just thought that was one of the biggest compliments I've ever had."

Beckham still weirded out being on billboards

Ad campaign. Becks talks about working with Guy Ritchie, his fitness routine and supporting his wife

Soccer star David Beckham on the set of his newest ad campaign for his bodywear collection in Los Angeles. HANDOUT

David Beckham has a knack for keeping his name in the news, and his face — and well-sculpted body — in front of the cameras. The newest ad campaign for his bodywear collection for global retailer H&M is being released on the heels of the announcement that he's joining the French Paris-Saint Germain soccer club.

The ad campaign, directed by Guy Ritchie, is more like a film short. Beckham stars as an action hero, saving the day in Los Angeles in his boxer briefs and bedroom slippers.

The 37-year-old Beckham said he's committed to this for the long haul, but is still a little startled looking up at a billboard and seeing a giant version of himself.

"No matter how many campaigns I do with H&M, I will never get used to seeing myself on billboards," he said. "It's always a surprise to me when I see them. I'm lucky to work with such great photographers and stylists, so the images are always the best they can be."

Beckham responded to questions via email.

Working with Ritchie seems like a little bit of a leap into acting. Is that where you are heading?
It's been great working with Guy. He's one of my favourite directors, and also a friend, so it was amazing to work with him on my new bodywear commercial for H&M. It was good fun playing an action hero for the day, getting to do all the stunts and ending up in unexpected situations, but acting full time is not something I see myself doing in the near future.

Is there a movie you wish you could have starred in?
I love Guy's film Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels. It came out in 1998, which was such an exciting time to be British. I remember the attitude and energy of the film as if it were yesterday, and it went on to define so much about how British men saw themselves for years to come. But I wouldn't want to actually appear in the movie — I have too much fun watching it.

What's the biggest challenge in sticking to your fitness routine?
Keeping fit is really important as playing football is all I've ever wanted to do. I'm training a lot at the moment so fitness is an integral part of my day. I think I'd find it more of a challenge if I wasn't able to keep in shape.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One more question

New York Fashion Week starts Thursday, and you are often at your wife's shows. What's it like for you in the front row?

- **Quote.** "Victoria works so hard on her collections, it's just nice to be able to go to the shows and see all that hard work come to life. I'm really proud of her, she gets nervous but it's always a great success."

Disney

Brace yourself Star Wars geeks

Disney is mining The Force for even more new films.

Walt Disney Co. CEO Bob Iger said Tuesday that screenwriters Larry Kasdan and Simon Kinberg are working on stand-alone Star Wars movies that aren't part of the new trilogy that's in the works.

"There has been speculation about some stand-alone films that have been in development, and I can confirm to you today that in fact we are working on a few stand-alone films," Iger told CNBC.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lady Gaga. ALL GETTY IMAGES

Lady Gaga's weird and wonderful dressing room requirements leaked

Lady Gaga's list of dressing room requirements has leaked, and while there are more demanding celebrity singers out there — Mariah Carey comes to mind — she wouldn't be Gaga without a few eyebrow-raising items.

Gaga's requests include lavender towels and hand soap as well as yellow, lavender and white roses and, according to correspondence obtained by Celebuzz, "a mannequin with puffy pink pubic hair."

Russell Brand

Despite Stern prodding, Brand refuses to thrash ex-wife Katy Perry

During a recent visit to Howard Stern's radio show, Russell Brand got the chance to criticize ex-wife Katy Perry for dating John Mayer, but he didn't take it. "Doesn't she know that he's a worse womanizer than you?" Stern asked, to which Brand joked, "Worse or better, depending on how you view it." But Stern's prodding didn't producer any naysaying. "So help me God, Howard Stern, I will not compromise my ex-wife's vagina for the sake of ratings," Brand declared. "That woman was perfect from top to bottom." As for Brand's own love life: "I'm not dating anybody. Actually, I'd like a romance," he says. "Not so much playing the field, just going through life, doing yoga, concentrating on this TV show and trying to find a nice wife."

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

'Unflattering' pictures put Beyoncé's vanity on show

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

On Monday Buzzfeed published a story entitled "The 33 Fiercest Moments From Beyoncé's Halftime Show" which, as the title entails, includes photos of Bey looking like the warrior princess she is. The problem? Apparently, Beyoncé and her team found some of the pictures unflattering and emailed the site to have them taken down as, god forbid, Beyoncé ever look unattractive. The email from her publicist read, "Thanks for taking my call. As discussed, there are some unflattering photos on your current feed that we are respectfully asking you to change. I am certain that you will be able to find some better photos."

The Word is reprinting one of the photos here. As you can see, it isn't the best but how in the world could a few bad shots of Beyoncé ruin her stature as an icon? They are merely drops in the ocean of Beyoncé imagery that saturate our day-to-day lives. Faces make faces, especially when you're performing as hard as she did on Sunday night. If anything, it's nice to know that she's actually a human and not some leather clad robot created by the Knowles family to make all women feel terrible about themselves.

Chris Brown

Brown may have to redo community services due to 'discrepancies'

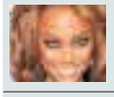
Chris Brown may have to start his community service all over again now that a Los Angeles District Attorney is alleging the singer failed to provide "credible, competent or verifiable evidence" that he fulfilled his obligation, according to the Los Angeles Times. Brown was given 180 days of community service as part of his sentence for assaulting Rihanna in 2009, and he was granted permission to complete it in his home state of Virginia. But now D.A. Mary Murray claims there are "significant discrepancies" in the reports about his service, which she says are "at best sloppy documentation and at worst fraudulent reporting." Brown's lawyer, Mark Geragos, is promising to fight back, though. "Apparently the district attorney's office has completely lost their minds," he tells the newspaper. "They are making scurrilous, libelous and defamatory statements and apparently have lost their ability to read their own reports."

Twitter

@carrieunderwood
A note to fellow air travelers: if you must talk SO loud, PLEASE keep the cursing to a minimum. We can't get away from you.

@RealMichelleT
Rules of Law & Order: if someone says, "There was this one guy.....". It's ALWAYS that guy.

@edward_burns
Feeling better. Flu subsiding. Getting back into bed with Scorsese. Taxi Driver this afternoon. Departed up next.



@tyrabanks
It's that time. "What time?", you ask. It's time to tell yourself just how fierce and fine you are.

INDULGE IN beauty
Super
SPEND YOUR POINTS EVENT!
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9 TO MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11
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THAT'S AN EXTRA $27
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Visit shoppersdrugmart.ca or the store nearest you for details.
*Some conditions may apply. See store for details.
Offer valid Saturday, February 9 to Monday, February 11, 2013 only.
SHOPPERS DRUG MART

From admiring to hiring: Jason woos famous faces

Wu done it.

The one-man style super force speaks of Stephanie Seymour, styling Michelle and his signature Wuism

KENYA HUNT
life@metronews.ca

Last month there was a rumour circulating on Twitter that your first words in English were Stephanie Seymour, who now stars in your ad campaign. Is that true?
Not quite, but it might as well be. When I first moved to Canada from Taiwan, my mom bought me a sewing machine. I didn't speak a lick of English. I grew up speaking Mandarin. So I learned the language by reading my mom's fashion magazines. I was never the best student in school. I learned by applying what I loved. One day I was talking to my aunt, who also had a lot of fashion magazines, and I pointed out Stephanie Seymour. She was like, 'How do you know who Stephanie is?' I've worked with so many people I grew up admiring. Fashion seems to be this impenetrable, daunting industry. But for me to be able to get to where I am today speaks to how many opportunities there are for young people in New York.

Even with the lingering recession?
It's funny because I started during an economic downturn.

Acclaimed designer Jason Wu moved at age nine from Taipei, Taiwan, to Vancouver. CONTRIBUTED

I've never really experienced a good economy in that regard. It's always been a little difficult. I started my business when people were running for the hills and not buying anything.

You've dressed Michelle Obama for two inaugurations. How did the second one differ from the first?
It wasn't something that I quite expected to happen. I can't say that I know so much about politics. And when I was approached the first time, I wasn't as familiar with Mrs. Obama. I felt like I was part of a moment. But with this second time, it felt more subtle. I felt like it was important for me to keep pretty private about it. I never wanted to sort of exploit the fact that the first lady has been so great to wear me on such an important occasion.

In some parts of the world, you, who left Taiwan as an adolescent and have a connection to Canada, are now the face of American fashion.
It's quite cliché in many ways, but a lot of times we talk about achieving the American dream, that you can come here from anywhere in the world, from any walk of life and succeed. And in the real world you don't think that ever happens. But my career has changed my mind about that.

You're collaborating with Lancôme on a beauty line. And you once created a nail polish collection for CND.
Beauty is a compliment to the clothes. In my teens I bought the Kevyn Aucoin books and used to just stare at them. They were so inspiring for me.

I've never been the person to do minimal hair and make-up. Beauty has always been a part of the design process for me. Even in my working with Hollywood actresses, I'll work with the hair and makeup. I've worked with Diane Kruger, Michelle Williams, Jessica Paré. When it's done correctly, it can create some magical moments.

Are there any that stand out in your mind?
Diane Kruger at the SAG Awards two years ago. We collaborated together. She wore red lips and was very high glam and high contrast. The combination of the hair and makeup and dress suited the event beautifully.

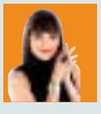
What can you tell us about your upcoming autumn/winter collection?
I've been working on being more confident in what I do and to create real signatures. So there's going to be a lot of signature Wuism that people have come to know me for, taken to another level. That's the whole part of brand building, to drive the point home every time you do anything. Naturally, I feel like I've grown up some.

Second time's a charm

What were you doing in the exact moment when you first saw Michelle Obama in her second inauguration gown?

For the last inauguration, I was at home. But this time my staff and I were working because I have my show coming up. We were live streaming it on my computers and no one wanted to talk about it so as not to jinx it. But when we saw her, we just all let out this scream. When I first did this four years ago, I had four employees. But this year, I had 30 to celebrate with.

Twitter



JEANNE SPACE
Jeanne Beker
life@metronews.ca

IN THIS HECTIC MODERN WORLD, TWITTER HAS BECOME A COOL AND SUCCINCT WAY OF COMMUNICATING. IT ALLOWS ME TO BE ACCESSIBLE, INSTANTLY SPEAK MY MIND AND CONNECTS ME WITH ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE.

@Jeanne_Beker: Very excited! I'm getting a special achievement award from the Canadian Academy of Film +TV on Feb. 27th

@MorleyNirenberg: Mazeltov Jeanne! So very well deserved. #tvicon

@Zaib_Shaikh: Big time Congrats Jeanne to a big time pioneer & ambassador.

@TOBeautyReviews: congratulations!!!! Well deserved!

@styleblogca: xoxo! Congrats, Jeanne!!! You are an inspiration.

@LisaTant: Congrats on the Canadian Academy honour @Jeanne_Beker So well-earned!

@Jeanne_Beker: Watching Symbiose by Hinda A at Semaine Mode Montreal...

The Kit

Canadian street style

Spotted in: Vancouver

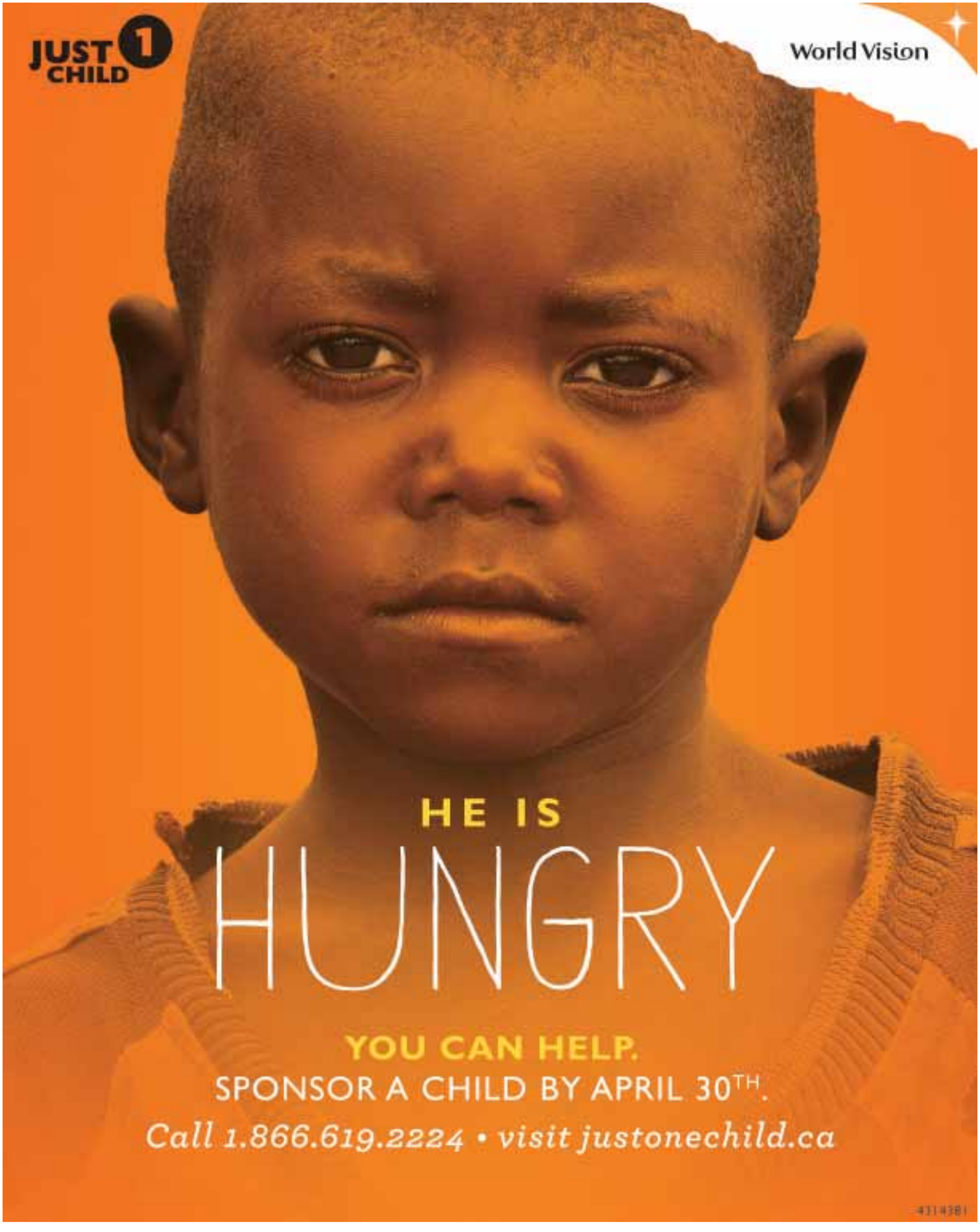
Sasha, Fashion lover Age: 22

What she's wearing
Obakki coat, Maison Olga Milan sweater, Wings + Horns scarf, Rag and Bone jeans, Dries Van Noten shoes.

Her inspiration
"The weather inspires me to dress cozy and warm and I always try to find a way to do this stylishly."

THE KIT PHOTOBLOGGER: M'C KENNETH LICON, LITTLEFASHIONISTO.COM

THE KIT IS A MULTI-PLATFORM BEAUTY AND FASHION BRAND WHICH INCLUDES AN INTERACTIVE MAGAZINE AND DYNAMIC APP, A WEBSITE, KIT CHAT – AN E-NEWSLETTER PROGRAM – AND A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER SECTION TOO!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Bring your favourite coffee shop home

Everybody knows the cost of that daily coffee you pick up on the way to work can add up to quite a bit of money each year. For Canadians who give in to the daily grind, we spend on average $700 each year for a plain cup of coffee. At this time of the year, it might be nice to save some money while enjoying our java. Invest in an at-home-brewing machine and a thermal travel mug and you could be saving hundreds of dollars a year on your morning ritual.

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

Not only can you save money, but you can also help keep millions of paper cups out of the land fills when you use a refillable mug. Here's a list of the machines and coffee costs (based on a five-day work week) from a few of your favourite java houses.

Tim Hortons' Tassimo

Canada's favourite cup of java by far. Their at-home brew comes in the form of the Tassimo T-DISCS capsules and gets made exclusively in a Tassimo at- home-brew machine. The average machine price is $160 and the coffee capsule is 65 cents — that's $169 per year.

Van Houtte's Keurig

An established coffee house in Quebec, Van Houtte is making inroads across Canada. Their at-home-brew version is from the Keurig's brewing system and capsules are called the K-CUP. The Keurig Special Edition 860 brewer machine costs $180 and the K-CUPS average 73 cents, that's $189.80 per year.

Starbucks Verisimo

Starbucks, the big American coffee shop, has done marvels for the coffee culture in Canada and around the world. For those who criticize the dark-roast blends, they've introduced the Blonde Roast coffee, a lighter, fresher coffee bean. Starbucks has their own at-home-brewing machine called the Verisimo System, which costs $200. Their Verisimo coffee pods cost an average of $1, which will average you about $260 for a coffee before each work day.

Timothys Keurig

A lesser know shop is Timothys, which started in Ontario and has spread throughout Canada and a bit in the United States. Their at-home-brewing machine is also the Keurig (like Van Houtte) and the B31 Brewer costs $100. Look for it in a few fashionable colours. The K-CUP capsules average 73 cents per cup, which tallies into about $189.80 per year for your morning work coffee.

Nespresso

Here's the case of a reverse situation. Nespresso launches quality brand espresso capsule systems and it becomes so popular that they start opening Nespresso Cafés around the world. Look for them on the toniest of streets in major Canadian cities. The fancy Nespresso Grand Maestria machine costs a whopping $800, capsules average 60 cents each or $156 per year. It's all about exclusivity and prestige with this brand.

It's the thought that counts: make your V-Day eco-friendly

What are the greenest flowers to choose for Valentine's Day?
- Mark, Calgary

QUEEN OF GREEN
Tovah Paglaro
green@metronews.ca

There is no more ubiquitous symbol of love than the Valentine's Day bouquet. But nothing says "I love you" quite as dismally as a pesticide-laden bouquet of flowers, grown by children in a country far away, under hideous working conditions. It's sort of a turnoff.

Luckily, your valentine blooms can plant the seed for long-lasting happiness when you choose fair-trade flowers or potted plants.

Fair-trade flowers are available from major retailers like Choices, Whole Foods and Thrifty Foods. Other florists may also have fair trade or local options available by request. If not, point them toward buds certified by one of three organizations: Fair-trade Canada, the Rainforest Alliance and Veriflora.

Although there are subtle differences between certifiers, they all provide similar assurances to the buyer and benefits to the grower.

A fair-trade bouquet or live plant is the best option for a green Valentine's Day. ISTOCK IMAGES

These include restrictions on certain agrochemicals, equitable wages (often double the standard) and a firm commitment to avoid child labour.

Fair-trade certification is a huge step toward showing your Valentine you care about her or his health and the world.

But it doesn't guarantee that the flowers you're giving are completely free of harmful chemicals. This is because no one tests imported flowers for chemical residues.

To shoot Cupid's arrow really straight, look for live flowers. Something that grows is an enduring symbol of your love, one that's infinitely more romantic than a short-lived burst of colour that dies within a few days.

A locally grown, pesticide-free plant is a great choice. Many household plants produce impressive flowers, with the added benefit of increasing the air quality in your home.

Or, for a fresh twist on the flower-giving tradition, surprise your garden-loving valentine with a thoughtful selection of spring seeds or bulbs.

Whether you choose a fair-trade bouquet or a beautiful live plant, your gal (or guy) will be romanced by the care you put into choosing a valentine that's as good for the world as it is thoughtful!

Have questions for the Queen of Green? Write to tpaglaro@davidsuzuki.org or tweet @DavidSuzukiQoG

Hygiene

It's simple — wash your coffee and teapot after every use. ISTOCK IMAGES

Cleaning not your cup of tea?

I never know if you're supposed to wash a coffee and teapot with soap and water after each use?
-Jen, Calgary

CHARLES THE BUTLER
askcharlesthebutler@metronews.ca
For more, visit charlesmacpherson.com

Some people suggest that by not washing a coffee or teapot, you actually enhance the flavours of the beverage. The oils of the coffee or tea stay in the pot and this helps with the flavour. My concern is that if you don't wash a coffee or teapot correctly, then the natural oil residue can become rancid and this definitely affects the flavours and can potentially make you sick.

The answer is simple. From a hygiene perspective, you must wash the coffee or teapot after each use.

Ensure that you rinse it out well after you have washed it to ensure that you don't leave any soap residue in the pot. When you do wash these, use a simple, soft cloth, with a PH neutral dish soap. Remember not to use too much soap.

A leaner and lighter way to commemorate Chinese New Year

ROSE REISMAN
for more, visit
rosereisman.com

I love the Mu Shiu served in Chinese restaurants. Minced pork, chicken or beef with hoisin sauce and vegetables is served in lettuce leaves or flour wraps.

They're high in calories and fat due to extra oil and the fattier quality of the beef.

These homemade ones taste great and they're leaner. The peanut sauce is made with light coconut milk.

Try them when you celebrate the Chinese New Year on Sunday.

1. Spray a large non-stick skillet with cooking oil, add the vegetable oil and place over medium-high heat. Sauté the onion until browned, about 5 minutes.

2. Add the carrot and bell pepper and sauté for another 8 minutes, until the vegetables are tender-crisp.

Ingredients

- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup diced carrot
- 3/4 cup diced red bell pepper
- 12 oz extra-lean ground beef
- 1/4 cup light coconut milk
- 2 tbsp natural peanut butter
- 4 tsp low-sodium soy sauce
- 4 tsp rice wine vinegar
- 2 tsp sesame oil
- 1 1/2 tsp minced garlic
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tsp sesame seeds
- 1 tsp minced fresh ginger
- 1/2 tsp hot Asian chili sauce
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro or parsley
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- 8 large Boston or butter lettuce leaves

Asian Beef Lettuce Wraps with Peanut Sauce

This recipe serves four. COURTESY OF ROSE REISMAN

3. Add the beef and sauté until no longer pink, about 4 minutes.

4. Combine the coconut milk, peanut butter, soy sauce, vinegar, sesame oil, garlic, honey, sesame seeds, ginger and chili sauce. Add it to the beef mixture and simmer everything for 3 minutes.

5. Stir in the cilantro and green onions. Divide among lettuce leaves and roll up or allow your guests to roll their own. **RECIPE COURTESY OF ROSE REISMAN**

Cookbook of the Week

Takeout, without the takeout part

Ordering in is not the only way to enjoy your favourite Chinese dishes.

In her book The Chinese Takeout Cookbook, Diana Kuan brings Chinatown to your kitchen with 80 popular recipes, including appetizers, main courses, noodle and rice dishes and desserts.

With colour photos throughout as well as helpful tips, Kuan helps you to master classics such as Cold Sesame Noodles, Kung Pao Chicken, Beef Chow Fun, Hot and Sour Soup, Moo Shu Pork, Black Sesame Ice Cream, Pork and Shrimp Egg Rolls and much more. **METRO**

The richness of pork and the earthiness of mushrooms

1. Filling: Soak shiitake mushrooms in warm water for 20 minutes. Drain and squeeze out excess water. Discard stems and finely chop mushroom caps. In bowl, mix mushrooms, pork, scallions, soy sauce, rice wine, sesame oil, salt and pepper. Set aside.

2. Keep wrappers covered with slightly damp towel until ready to use to prevent from drying out. Fill small bowl with water for sealing dumplings. Take wrapper and place heaping 5 ml (1 tsp) of filling in middle. Be careful not to put in too much or it will leak out during folding process. Dip finger in water and moisten wrapper edges all around. Take dumpling in hand and fold wrapper in half without sealing it. With right thumb and index finger, make pleat in centre of top layer of wrapper, leaving the bottom layer unpleated. Make 2 more identical pleats in same direction, until you end up with 3 pleats on right side. With left thumb and index finger, make 2 more pleats on left side. Press all pleats to seal. Finished wrapped dumpling should resemble a crescent. Lay finished dumpling on a plate. Keep dumplings covered with slightly damp towel until remaining ingredients are used.

This recipe makes about 50 dumplings. THE CANADIAN PRESS H/O

Ingredients

- 1 pkg dumpling wrappers (about 50)
- Peanut oil, for pan-frying (about 15 ml/1 tbsp per dozen)

Filling

- 8 dried shiitake mushrooms
- 500 g (1 lb) ground pork
- 2 scallions, finely chopped
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) soy sauce
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) Chinese rice wine or dry sherry
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) sesame oil
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) salt
- 0.5 ml (1/8 tsp) freshly ground black pepper

Soy & Vinegar Dipping Sauce

- 45 ml (3 tbsp) soy sauce
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) Chinese black vinegar
- 5 ml (1 tsp) sesame oil or chili oil

3. Make sure to use large flat-bottomed skillet and have lid ready. Heat skillet over medium-high heat. Add 15 ml (1 tbsp) of the peanut oil and swirl to coat the bottom.

4. Working in batches, line dumplings in pan, smooth side down. Cook 2 mins. or until smooth side starts to brown. Reduce heat to medium. Carefully add about 125 ml (1/2 cup) water to pan, and immediately cover with a lid to contain spitting oil. Let dumplings steam 5 mins or until all or most of water has evaporated. Remove lid and loosen dumplings with a spatula. Turn off the heat.

5. If you are doing repeated batches, wash and dry pan so there is no residual water when you pan-fry your next batch. Repeat pan-frying process with remaining dumplings, adding more oil as necessary.

6. In bowl, whisk soy sauce, black vinegar and sesame oil. Transfer sauce to small sauce dishes and serve. **THE CANADIAN PRESS/ THE CHINESE TAKEOUT COOKBOOK: QUICK AND EASY DISHES TO PREPARE AT HOME BY DIANA KUAN (BALLANTINE BOOKS, 2012)**

Dessert. Almond Cookies

1. Heat oven to 160 C (325 F).

2. In a standing electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine flour, sugar, baking soda and salt. Beat in softened butter a few pieces at a time at low speed, until texture resembles that of cornmeal. Beat in eggs and almond extract until a smooth dough is formed.

3. Roll dough between your palms into 3-cm (1 1/4-inch) balls and place them 5 cm (2 inches) apart on ungreased baking sheets.

4. Using the palm of your hand, gently flatten each ball and place an almond in the middle of each. Brush the top of each cookie with egg glaze.

5. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes or until cookies are golden on top, rotating the top and bottom baking sheets halfway through.

6. Transfer cookies to a cooling rack and let cool for at least 5 minutes before serving. The cookies will keep for up to 3 to 4 days in an airtight container. **THE CANADIAN PRESS/ THE CHINESE TAKEOUT COOKBOOK: QUICK AND EASY DISHES TO PREPARE AT HOME BY DIANA KUAN (BALLANTINE BOOKS, 2012).**

Ingredients

- 625 ml (2 1/2 cups) all-purpose flour
- 250 ml (1 cup) sugar
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) baking soda
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) salt
- 250 g (1/2 lb or 2 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into pieces and softened
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 10 ml (2 tsp) almond extract
- 40 whole almonds
- 1 large egg, beaten, for glaze

VALENTINE'S DAY!
gift guide

Switch things up this Valentine's Day by trying something different. Below are a number of fun date options for you and your honey. ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

Dates are a many-splendoured thing

ASTRID VAN DEN BROEK
For Metro

So maybe you didn't score a reservation at the restaurant of your dreams. Or perhaps you are looking to do something different or something new. If you want to switch things up this Valentine's Day, here are 10 fun date options for you and your honey.

1 Karaoke. "You can do this whether you just started dating or if you've been together for a long time," says Kim Hughes, singles and dating expert for the Toronto-based online dating site Lavalife.com.

2 Take in a pub. "Visit an old timer's bar — every neighbourhood has one — and have a pint and play darts," Hughes said. "It takes the pressure off of the date and you're not going to have to hand over your wallet at the door to go in."

3 Go bowling. Better yet, if you are a new couple and aren't sure where the relationship is going, grab another couple or two to go along with you and team up, Hughes suggested.

4 Revisit. "If you did something on the very first date you went on, do it again and go down memory lane," says Sheree Morgan, a Vancouver-based matchmaker and dating coach.

5 Move together. "Take a dance lesson together or go to a salsa or meringue dance club," says Kateryna Spiwak, a Toronto-based dating and relationship coach. "Or you could go bowling together or play Ping-Pong for fun."

6 Make it a threesome. No, not like that. "Have dinner at home and bring in a massage therapist to come by to give you massages," Spiwak said.

7 Make the most of winter. If the lucky two of you have the afternoon or day off, hit the slopes for some skiing and après-skiing cocktails, dinner and snuggling. Don't ski? Try tobogganing or snowshoeing.

8 Think themed. If you are in a big city, visit your local museum to take in an Asian exhibit and follow that up with a Thai, Chinese or Japanese dinner.

9 Bring dinner home. Rather than heading out to a packed restaurant with its equally jammed reservation schedule, hire a chef to cook dinner in your home. "Or hire someone to come in and play music for you while you're having dinner at home," Spiwak said.

10 Pretend it's prom. Spring for a limo to take a drive through your city or to take you from your home to cocktails to dinner.

Cost-efficient dates

No money? On a bit of a budget? Here are a few cost-efficient options for date night.

- Go for a skate (or toboggan ride). Assuming you have your own gear, including sharpened skates or toboggan, head out for some free winter fun.
- Make dinner at home. "There's no need to make anything elaborate and it's much more fun when both of you are participating," says Sheree Morgan, a Vancouver-based matchmaker and dating coach.
- Explore together. "Go enjoy a new part of your city or town that you're not as familiar with," suggests Kateryna Spiwak, a Toronto-based dating and relationship coach. "And if it's in your budget, have dinner in that area, too."
- Take a hike. "People often hike on the weekends together, so if you have the day off go for a hike through a nature preserve or valley area," Spiwak said.
- Make it movie night. PVR a movie ahead of time and uncork a bottle of wine for a movie night at home.

7 shopping days left

Gifts for the one you love

Tiffany Locks pendants in sterling silver: Emblem lock, $165, large heart lock, $165, mini round lock with a pendant chain, $140, tiffany.com.

Why I Love You Journal: A Journal of Us helps you express your love, $10.99, indigo.ca.

Clinique Happy Heart is a well-loved fragrance and some proceeds go to the Happy Hearts Fund for rebuilding schools, $42, clinique.com.

Body Shop Chocomania Deluxe Edition collection includes a range of products, thebodyshop.ca.

Make your own photo book at Blurb to help you commemorate the love you share, blurb.ca.

Enjoy a heart-shaped pizza at Boston Pizza exclusively on Feb. 14. $1 from each sale goes to charities, bostonpizza.com.

Fragments ring in sterling silver with Chalcedony and crystals. erintracydesigns.com.

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The L.A. Kings 2011-12 Stanley Cup banner is raised during a ceremony before the NHL season opening game at Staples Center on Jan. 19. The Kings are one of three teams who made a deep push into the playoffs last year, but are struggling this season to find a rhythm. HARRY HOW/GETTY IMAGES

Three big guns losing the playoff scent

NHL. Former contenders look for spark with 20% of season in the books

They made up three teams of the NHL's version of the final four last season.

This season, the Los Angeles Kings, New York Rangers and Phoenix Coyotes aren't playing like Stanley Cup contenders. All three have failed to build on their post-season runs and sky-high pre-season expectations. The Kings, the defending Stanley Cup champions, and the Rangers wouldn't even make the playoffs at this rate. And amid complicated ownership issues, the Coyotes are just hanging on.

In this lockout-shortened season, where slow starts can prove costly, all three are in a rush to recapture what made them so special last May.

This trio of underachievers has company when it comes to slow-starting teams, however. The Minnesota Wild, Philadelphia Flyers, Washington Capitals and Detroit Red Wings are all among a group lacking that extra spark. And just like that, 20 per cent of the season is already in the books.

The Rangers can probably forget about winning the conference for the second straight season. New York has little depth and no scoring punch outside of the top line. Front-loading that first line of Marian Gaborik, Brad Richards and Rick Nash has worked. They've combined for nine goals and 23 points. It's the rest of the team that's struggled.

The Coyotes, with their long-term future now uncertain, are slowly turning around their season and have points in their last five games.

"I think we're just getting a rhythm," Coyotes general manager Don Maloney told the team's website. "You hate to make any excuses, but we played 10 games in 17 nights without basically any camp. The first five, six were a whirlwind. We were trying to sort ourselves out."

The Kings may be the most disappointing of them all. The defending champs are in the midst of playing eight of nine games on the road. They hope they can ride out the rough patch without falling further behind, before opening a stretch of five straight home games and 10 of 12 overall starting March 4. Like the Rangers, the Kings simply can't score. Toss out Jeff Carter's four goals, and they only have 15 this season.

Where the teams finish, of course, doesn't really matter, as long as they make the playoffs. But something needs to change soon, or they'll continue to be on the outside looking in.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Big flop in The Big Apple

"We have some guys that are very tentative, very careful. We don't play careful hockey."

Rangers coach John Tortorella on his team's lacklustre start to the season.

Olympics

Canada not budging from Own the Podium stance

Canada won more gold medals than any country at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, but that's not the goal a year from now in Sochi.

The target for the 2014 Winter Games remains as it was for Vancouver — to beat all other countries in total medals won.

Canada did not achieve that in 2010. The team finished third in the overall medal count with 26 behind the United States (37) and Germany (30).

While Canada's 14 gold in Vancouver set a record for the most won by a country at a single Winter Games, the country isn't moving off the objective of winning the overall medal count in Sochi.

The latter approach is inclusive and gives Canadians more opportunities to celebrate performances, says the chief executive officer of Own The Podium.

"Our objective is to contend for No. 1 in total medals," Anne Merklinger says. "Every medal matters to our country and to Canadians."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

WHL

Blades romp to sixth straight win

Michael Ferland and Matej Stransky scored two goals apiece in the Saskatoon Blades' 7-1 rout of the Prince Albert Raiders Wednesday night.

The Blades held at 6-0 lead at the second intermission before trading markers in the third.

The victory was Saskatoon's sixth in a row.

Andrey Makarov stopped 30 of 31 shots for the Blades. METRO

Bruins snap Habs' home winning streak

Linemates Tyler Seguin and David Krejci scored in the opening 2:05 of the third period as the Boston Bruins defeated the Montreal Canadiens 2-1 on Wednesday night.

The victory moved the Bruins (7-1-1) into sole possession of first place in the Northeast Division and kept Montreal (6-3-0) from taking over the division lead.

P.K. Subban scored his first of the season on a second-period power play for Montreal, which ended a five-game home winning run. Boston outshot Montreal 23-22.

It was a quiet, mostly skirmish-free game for the rival teams, who stuck to strong positional hockey other than Montreal's brief letdown in the third period.

Subban broke the deadlock at 10:53 of the second with Milan Lucic serving a high-sticking penalty. The goal drew big applause from the Bell Centre crowd as Subban did the leg-lifted "Joel" pose in celebration.

It ended a string of 16 straight penalty kills on the road since the start of the season for Boston.

Seguin tied it only 14 seconds into the third frame as he lifted the puck past Carey Price from the edge of the crease after a feed from Krejci.

The Bruins then went on a rush and Lucic passed in front where the on-rushing Krejci beat Tomas Plekanec to the puck to redirect it into the net at 2:05. THE CANADIAN PRESS

On Wednesday

2	1
Bruins	Canadiens

Montreal Canadiens defenceman P.K. Subban hooks Lane MacDermid of the Boston Bruins on Wednesday in Montreal. RICHARD WOLOWICZ/GETTY IMAGES

Milanovich, Hufnagel, Benevides up for award

CFL coach of the year. Winner will be named Feb. 28 in Regina

Scott Milanovich of the Grey Cup champion Toronto Argonauts was named a finalist for the CFL's coach of the year award Wednesday.

John Hufnagel of the Calgary Stampeders and Mike Benevides of the B.C. Lions were the other finalists.

Voting was conducted by the Football Reporters of Canada. The award winner will be honoured Feb. 28 in Regina.

Toronto finished second in the East Division with a 9-9 record under its rookie head coach. But following playoff wins over Edmonton and Montreal, the Argos downed Calgary 35-22 in the 100th Grey Cup game at Rogers Centre.

Hufnagel, the CFL's top coach in 2008, led Calgary to second spot in the West Division with a 12-6 record despite losing starter Drew Tate to injury for most of the season.

Benevides guided the 2011 champion Lions to a league-best 13-5 record in his first season as head coach. The 13 victories tied a Lions' club record for most wins by a first-year head coach.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto Argonauts head coach Scott Milanovich, pictured receiving a Gatorade shower after his team defeated the Calgary Stampeders for the Grey Cup, was named a finalist for the CFL's coach of the year award Wednesday along with John Hufnagel of the Calgary Stampeders and Mike Benevides of the B.C. Lions. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

CFL. New GM Hervey wastes no time putting his stamp on Eskimos

It hasn't taken general manager Ed Hervey long to put his stamp on the Edmonton Eskimos.

A whirlwind week for the team began last Thursday with the acquisition of quarterback Mike Reilly from the B.C. Lions. It continued Tuesday with a five-player trade with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats and another trade with Montreal Alouettes and was capped Wednesday with the signing of two young free agents.

Hervey, who was named GM on Dec. 10, said the changes aren't done yet.

"We'll never be satisfied until we win a championship but the moves we're making gives us a chance to compete," he said Wednesday at a new conference to introduce Reilly to the Edmonton media. "We're looking at making a few more moves, there will be a few more moves made."

First there are a couple of free agents he has to sign on his own roster, including seven-year CFL veteran defensive back Chris Thompson.

"Hopefully we can get those guys signed before free agency and then we can make a nice, subtle push in free agency when it gets here," he said. "But so far so good. As we look around the roster we've gotten younger, a little bigger, more athletic in some areas and we've improved the quarterback play tremendously."

Reilly, who spent the last three seasons backing up Travis Lulay in B.C., is looking forward to a fresh start with the Eskimos.

"It's a great opportunity to be part of a great organization, a great franchise that has incredible history and tradition, not only as a championship program, but also having developed top quality quarterbacks," said the six-foot-three, 215-pound Reilly.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

New faces

Other recent acquisitions made by Hervey:

- QB Jacory Harris
- RB Kyle Exume
- LB Nathan Kanya
- OL Carson Rockhill

Skiing

Vonn eyeing end-of-year return

Lindsey Vonn is determined to be back competing for medals at next year's Sochi Olympics despite her season-ending knee injury after a crash.

According to the U.S. Ski Team's Alpine director, she's even hoping to start racing again in late November or early December.

Vonn tore two ligaments in her right knee and broke a bone in her lower leg in the opening race of the world championships, and the reigning Olympic downhill champion will undergo surgery in the U.S. next week.

"I am grateful to my fans for the outpouring of support, which has really helped me stay positive," Vonn said in a statement on Wednesday, a day after her super-G crash in Schladming. "I can assure you that I will work as hard as humanly possible to be ready to represent my country next year in Sochi."

Because of the intense media attention, neither she nor the U.S. Ski Team would say when she's leaving Austria.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	10	7	3	0	34	24	14
New Jersey	9	5	1	3	23	20	13
NY Islanders	9	4	4	1	29	30	9
NY Rangers	9	4	5	0	20	25	8
Philadelphia	10	4	6	0	23	27	8

NORTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Boston	9	7	1	1	26	20	15
Ottawa	10	6	3	1	29	19	13
Montreal	9	6	3	0	27	19	12
Toronto	10	5	5	0	25	29	10
Buffalo	10	3	6	1	30	37	7

SOUTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Tampa Bay	9	6	3	0	40	23	12
Winnipeg	9	4	4	1	27	34	9
Carolina	8	4	4	0	22	24	8
Florida	9	3	5	1	22	33	7
Washington	10	2	7	1	23	36	5

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	10	8	0	2	33	23	18
St. Louis	9	6	3	0	32	25	12
Nashville	9	4	2	3	20	21	11
Detroit	9	4	4	1	23	28	9
Columbus	10	3	6	1	20	32	7

NORTHWEST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Vancouver	9	5	2	2	24	22	12
Edmonton	9	4	3	2	22	24	10
Minnesota	9	4	4	1	21	24	9
Colorado	9	4	5	0	21	23	8
Calgary	7	2	3	2	20	25	6

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
San Jose	10	7	2	1	34	21	15
Anaheim	8	6	1	1	29	23	13
Phoenix	10	4	4	2	29	27	10
Dallas	10	4	5	1	20	25	9
Los Angeles	8	3	3	2	20	25	8

Note: A team winning in overtime or shootout is credited with two points and a victory in the W column; the team losing in overtime or shootout receives one point which is registered in the OL (other loss) column.

Wednesday's results
Boston 2 Montreal 1
Anaheim at Colorado
Dallas at Edmonton
Tuesday's results
Toronto 3 Washington 2
Los Angeles 4 Columbus 2
Pittsburgh 4 NY Islanders 2
New Jersey 3 NY Rangers 1
Philadelphia 2 Tampa Bay 1
Calgary 4 Detroit 1
Ottawa 4 Buffalo 3
Winnipeg 3 Florida 2 (OT)
Nashville 6 St. Louis 1
Chicago 5 San Jose 3
Thursday's games — All Times Eastern
Florida at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Washington at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m.
Tampa Bay at New Jersey, 7 p.m.
Calgary at Columbus, 7 p.m.
NY Islanders at NY Rangers, 7 p.m.
Montreal at Buffalo, 7 p.m.
Carolina at Ottawa, 7:30 p.m.
Toronto at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.
Los Angeles at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Detroit at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Vancouver at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
Chicago at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Friday's games
Anaheim at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	Pt
Vanek, Buf	8	11	19
Stamkos, TBL	7	9	16
Kane, Chi	6	9	15
Marleau, SJ	9	5	14
Pominville, Buf	6	8	14
Crosby, Phg	4	10	14
Thornton, SJ	3	11	14
St. Louis, TBL	3	11	14
Zetterberg, Det	5	8	13
Pavelski, SJ	5	8	13
Clarkson, NJ	7	5	12
Kunitz, Phg	6	6	12
Conacher, TBL	5	7	12
Enstrom, Win	2	10	12
Malkin, Phg	2	10	12
Couture, SJ	6	5	11
Lecavalier, TBL	4	7	11
Tavares, NYI	4	7	11
Ribeiro, Wash	3	8	11
Staal, Car	7	3	10
Parise, Min	6	4	10
Hossa, Chi	6	4	10
Tarasenko, STL	5	5	10
Hodgson, Buf	5	5	10
Gagner, Edm	3	7	10
Datsyuk, Det	3	7	10
Vrbata, Phx	3	7	10
Purcell, TBL	2	8	10
Elias, NJ	2	8	10

Not including last night's games

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	32	14	.696	—
New York	31	16	.660	1½
Indiana	31	19	.620	3
Chicago	29	19	.604	4
Brooklyn	29	20	.592	4½
Atlanta	27	21	.563	6
Milwaukee	25	22	.532	7½
Boston	25	23	.521	8
Philadelphia	21	27	.438	12
Detroit	18	32	.360	16
Toronto	**17**	**32**	**.347**	**16½**
Cleveland	15	34	.306	18½
Orlando	14	35	.286	19½
Washington	13	35	.271	20
Charlotte	11	37	.229	22

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	38	11	.776	—
Oklahoma City	37	12	.755	1
L.A. Clippers	35	16	.686	4
Denver	31	18	.633	7
Memphis	30	18	.625	7½
Golden State	30	19	.612	8
Utah	27	22	.551	11
Houston	27	24	.529	12
Portland	25	23	.521	12½
L.A. Lakers	23	26	.469	15
Dallas	20	28	.417	17½
Minnesota	18	27	.400	18
Phoenix	17	32	.347	21
Sacramento	17	33	.340	21½
New Orleans	15	33	.313	22½

Note: division leaders ranked in top three positions regardless of winning percentage.

Wednesday's results
L.A. Clippers 86 Orlando 76
Indiana 88 Philadelphia 69
Cleveland 122 Charlotte 95
Washington 106 New York 96
Boston 99 **Toronto 95**
Miami 114 Houston 108
Atlanta 103 Memphis 92
Brooklyn 93 Detroit 90
Oklahoma City 119 Golden State 98
Phoenix at New Orleans
Portland at Dallas
Milwaukee at Utah
San Antonio at Minnesota
Tuesday's results
Indiana 114 Atlanta 103
L.A. Lakers 92 Brooklyn 83
Phoenix 96 Memphis 90
Houston 140 Golden State 109
Denver 112 Milwaukee 104
Thursday's games — All Times Eastern
L.A. Lakers at Boston, 8 p.m.
Chicago at Denver, 10:30 p.m.

Rams DL Charles catching NFL eyes

Football. Stefan Charles has spoken to Atlanta, Jacksonville and Dallas

Regina Rams defensive lineman Stefan Charles, second from left, in game action. COURTESY OF B2 DIGITAL IMAGING

Charles' stats

- Over three seasons at Regina, the six-foot-five, 310-pound Stefan Charles had 56.5 tackles and 10.5 sacks in 22 career games.

Time hasn't quite cured what ails Stefan Charles.

The 24-year-old native of Oshawa, Ont., has always been an Atlanta Falcons fan and hasn't got over the heartbreak of the franchise's 34-19 Super Bowl loss to the Denver Broncos in January 1999. But having the opportunity to don the team's colours would certainly erase that lingering bitterness.

The towering Regina Rams defensive lineman can certainly dream big these days considering he's garnering plenty of interest south of the border leading up to the 2013 NFL draft in April. He's hoping to follow in the footsteps of former teammate Akiem Hicks, who was selected in the third round last year by the New Orleans Saints.

"When I played next to Akiem (in 2011) I didn't feel there really was much of a difference between us," said Charles, who has declared for this year's NFL draft. "Any team that takes me is going to get a player who will work hard and always want to be the best.

"I'm always looking at what I need to do to improve and get better."

The scouting report on Charles says that he is very athletic and possesses a long reach, qualities that could make him a nice fit as a defensive end in an NFL three-man front. Not bad, considering Charles never played minor football growing up and early in high school was a basketball player before turning his attention to the gridiron.

Quoted

"He can play professional football. Whether it's the NFL or CFL really depends on him."

Rams head coach Frank McCrystal says Stefan Charles definitely has the and ability to play at the next level.

To date, Charles has spoken to Atlanta, Jacksonville and Dallas while several other clubs — including Pittsburgh, Houston, Indianapolis and Seattle — have called Regina looking for his game film.

But it's the Falcons that Charles grew up cheering for.

"It has always been the Falcons," he said. "I used to root for (former Atlanta running back) Jamal Anderson and I was heartbroken when they lost the Super Bowl."

However, Charles will have the luxury of options when it comes to where he plays next.

He's also very highly regarded for this year's CFL Canadian college draft.

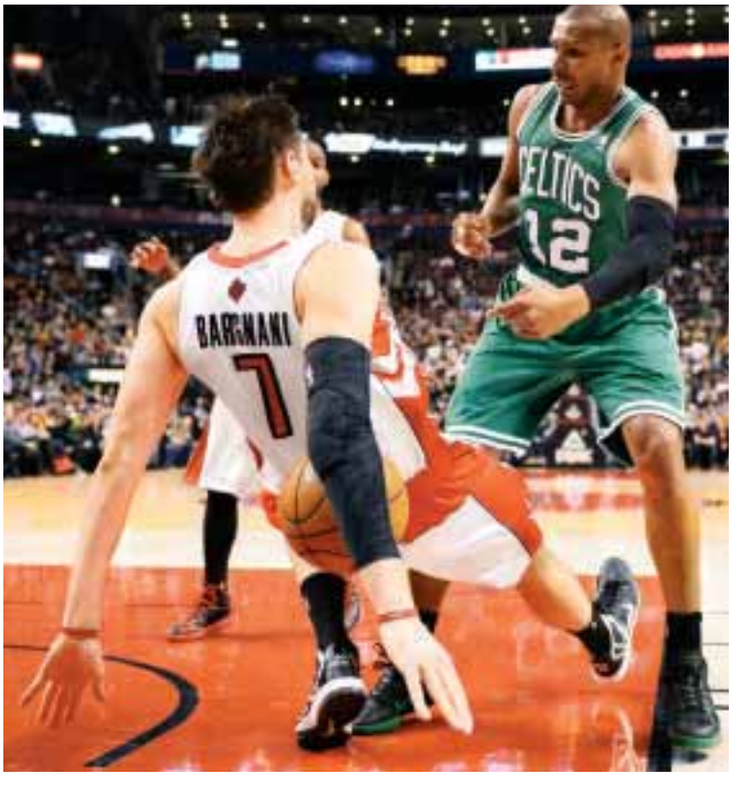
The league's central scouting bureau has ranked Charles fourth among the top-15 prospects for the 2013 draft.

And Charles would readily welcome the opportunity to play in the CFL.

"All I'd like is the opportunity to play professional football," he said. "That's all I need, really.

"I know I have a lot I need to work on but any team that takes me is going to get a player who will work hard to be the best he can be. They definitely won't regret it."

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Streaking Celtics bowl over Raptors

Raptor Andrea Bargnani falls as he battles for the ball with Boston Celtic Leandro Barbosa on Wednesday in Toronto. Boston won its fifth straight game, beating Toronto 99-95. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ronaldinho has poor return to global soccer stage

Luiz Felipe Scolari and Ronaldinho endured disappointing returns to international football as Brazil lost 2-1 to England, while Spain, Germany and Argentina all won high-profile friendlies on Wednesday to justify their position as the world's top three teams.

World and European champion Spain stretched its unbeaten run to 17 games by beating Uruguay 3-1 in Doha, Germany came from behind to beat France 2-1 away and Lionel Messi failed to score but played a key role in Argentina's 3-2 win over Sweden.

Scolari, who led Brazil to its fifth and most recent world title in 2002, took charge of his first game in his second spell as coach and handed Ronaldinho a recall to the team for his 100th cap.

The former Barcelona playmaker, who hadn't played for Brazil for a year, had an early penalty saved at Wembley Stadium before Wayne Rooney and Frank Lampard scored goals to help England end a 23-year winless record against the Brazilians.

Brazilian Ronaldinho on Wednesday. GETTY IMAGES

"I'm used to losing the first game but after this I'm used to winning games and winning competitions," Scolari said. "I'm not disappointed and I'm not sad."

Also, Marco Verratti scored a stoppage-time equalizer for Italy in a 1-1 draw at the Netherlands and Cristiano Ronaldo scored in a losing cause for Portugal, which was beaten 3-2 at home to Ecuador.

Spain and France were looking for confidence-boosting results ahead of their meeting in a crucial World Cup qualifier next month — and it was the top-ranked Spanish who will be more satisfied as international football returned to the schedule for the first time in 2013 with some glamorous matchups.

Diminutive winger Mathieu Valbuena headed in from close range just before halftime for France, but Thomas Mueller equalized in the 51st and Sami Khedira scored the winner 16 minutes from time for second-ranked Germany's first win over the French in 26 years — when it was still West Germany.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

Horoscopes

Aries
March 21 - April 20
Friendships are under excellent stars at the moment and someone you meet on your travels will become a firm favourite. Yes, they're a bit "different" but that's what makes them so interesting.

Taurus
April 21 - May 21
The current planetary set-up is overwhelmingly favourable. No, really, it is. Today's influences are especially good for matters related to your work or career, so make use of them. Let your boss see how keen and committed you are.

Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Employers and other important people are hugely impressed by your efforts over the past few months and some sort of recognition or promotion cannot be far away. They can see you've got what it takes — so take it.

Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You don't have to be fearful. You don't have to hide in the shadows. The way to overcome your doubts is to put them to the test. Do something today that most people would try to avoid. You're not most people.

Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Try not to be too hard on yourself. Yes, you have made mistakes, maybe more than a few. But you are human like everyone else, so don't beat yourself up about it. You make more mistakes because you take more risks.

Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
What you need to remember today is that pressure can be creative. It may feel as if you are being forced to move into unfamiliar territory but don't complain too much. You will feel the benefits soon enough.

Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Expect only good things over the next 24 hours. With Venus, your ruler, linked to luck planet Jupiter, no matter how far-reaching the changes in your life may be they will be positive ones. So, why worry?

Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Break out of your rut and do something more constructive with your time. What that something is only you can decide. But, anything of an artistic nature will go well for you now as will affairs of the heart.

Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You will have to act quickly today if you want to avoid some kind of feud boiling over. Be fast, be firm and be the one who demands honesty all round. Too many people are still avoiding the truth.

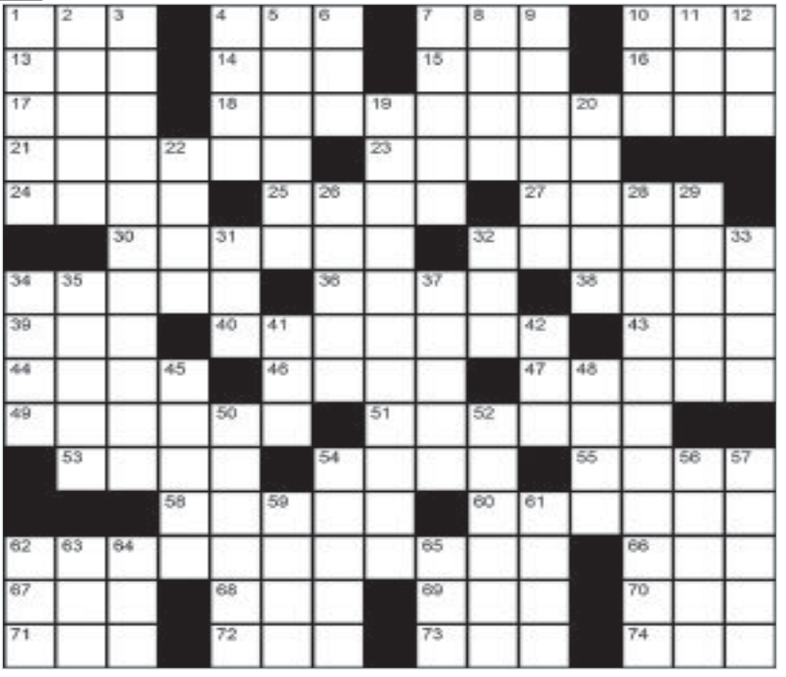
Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Ignore rules and regulations. Do what comes naturally and take no notice of those who say you should do everything by the book. If you listen to them, it's unlikely you will ever get anywhere worth going.

Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
The omens are very much in your favour and there is no telling what you might achieve if you have the courage to take a few risks. On the love front, especially, you will be much in demand over the next 24 hours.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
It may seem as if everyone but you is having fun at the moment but that's just because of your negative outlook. Open your eyes and see what a truly privileged lifestyle you lead and pretty soon you'll be smiling again. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

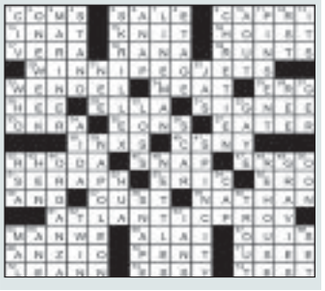
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Shih __ (Cute dog)
4. Calgary, __.
7. Mil. authority
10. Canadian actor Mr. Bellows
13. Distinguished [abbr.]
14. Actress Ms. Ling
15. King, in Portugal
16. Rapa __ (Easter Island)
17. Dadaist Jean
18. Historic site in Alberta, Head-Smashed-In __ __
21. Fur __ (Beaver's bane in early Canada)
23. Earth's __ layer
24. Evening: French
25. Gaelic
27. Require
30. The Ewing Clan's show
32. Ruffled-waist, as on a dress
34. Gangster from 'Star Wars', __ the Hutt
36. Singer of "Grace Kelly"
38. Popeye comics kid, __'Pea
39. "Take __, _ insist!"
40. iPads, and others
43. 'Fact' finisher
44. __ vinegar
46. TV-watcher's spot
47. Symbols
49. Dickinson of "Dragons' Den"
51. Together
53. "This __ laughing matter!": 2 wds.
54. Their: French
55. Increases twofold, for short
58. Courtroom event
60. Breakfast serving
62. Acadian singer of "Kissing Rain": 2 wds.
66. 'One' to Marie-Claire
67. British singer Rita
68. Affixed, abbreviated
69. Hour div.
70. Opposite WSW
71. VJ's network
72. __ Vegas
73. Mac rivals
74. Hockey great Mr. Apps

Down
1. "__ great!" (Congrats!)
2. Mask-and-sword swashbuckler
3. Causes of past due notices: 2 wds.
4. Superior at a French monastery
5. Comedy duo, __ and Hardy
6. "I Love Myself Today" by __ Naked
7. Fad
8. "Canadian Idol" Season 5 winner, Brian __
9. The __ Quintuplets
10. Antelope with ox-like horns
11. 'Consort' completer
12. Collagen target
19. Coal and petroleum: 2 wds.
20. Army vehicles
22. Dullsville
26. Sylvester Stallone title role
28. Dan Aykroyd's harmonica-playing character: 2 wds.
29. Expected to arrive: 2 wds.
31. Globe's long. crosser
32. Mr. Sajak
33. Prescriptions, commonly
34. "Letters from Iwo __" (2006)
35. Video game pioneer
37. Mr. Reeves
41. Peer Gynt's mother
42. Sixties-style protest, __-in
45. Wedding anniversary for tin
48. Relinquish control
50. Aboriginal artist Mr. Morrisseau, The Picasso of the North
52. Alanis Morissette hit
54. Milks: French
56. Squiggy's "Laverne & Shirley" pal
57. Hamilton, __ City
59. Speck
61. Clothing department
62. Movie genre, __-com
63. 'Comf' completer
64. Cleveland NBA-er
65. Rapscallion

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

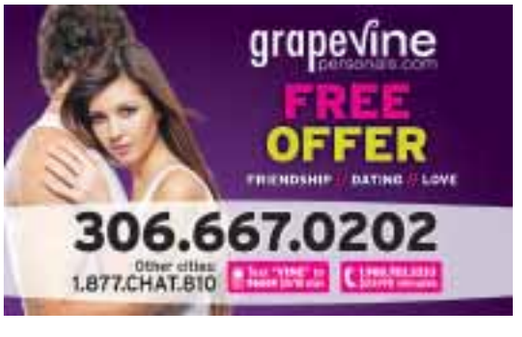
How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

8			1	3	7			6
	2				9	1		
				6				
4		3					7	
	1	8				5	9	
	7					2		3
				8				
		4	3				1	
6			4	9	5			2

Yesterday's Sudoku

3	9	6	5	8	7	4	2	1
2	5	1	8	9	4	7	3	6
4	8	7	2	1	3	6	9	5
9	4	3	7	2	6	5	1	9
8	7	9	3	5	1	2	6	4
5	1	2	9	4	8	3	7	8
7	3	5	1	6	9	8	4	2
1	2	4	6	3	5	9	8	7
9	8	6	4	7	2	1	5	3

Sharability



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